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homemakers' chat
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U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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Monday, November 6, 1944

Subject: "Woolens that Reek, and Other Winter Clothing Problems" Information from Extension Service of the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

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With woolens coming out of storage and windows being battened down, an old familiar winter worry is making the rounds again. Women at home and women at work are again quoting that well-worn question: "Isn't there some way of keeping our clothes from reeking with stale smoke all winter?"

At home, at the office, on the bus, or on the trolly, the story is the same, of course. Fresh air is being shut out, and smoke is being shut in. Added to that is the fact that when it comes ot woolens, odors just linger longer than in washable cottons or other lighter-weight materials.

Against this combination, here are the measures recommended by Extension clothing specialists of the U. S. Department of Agriculture:

Of first importance is proper ventilation for clothes closets as well as the rest of the house. That's to keep tobacco smoke and other odors from accumulating where clothes are stored. Then, of course, frequent fresh-air baths for woolens also recommended. Breezy, sunshiny days are made to order for homemakers trying to combat that smoky smell. If there's no breeze blowing, a good brushing will help along the deodorizing process.

The fight against woolens that reek can be taken to the clothes closet itself. And believe it or not--an apple can be effective in keeping odors as well as the doctor away. Fixed up in the right way, of course. And that goes for an orange too. The right way--well--just follow these directions for making a spiced apple or a clove orange.

These two ingenious devices can be made in almost the time it takes to tell about them. Take the spiced apple for example! All you need are some whole cloves and a red, well-shapped apple. As for making an apple spice ball - it's as simple as this: Just wash and dry the apple. Then - beginning at the top of the apple - force a row of whole cloves in a circle around the stem. Push them in up to their heads. Follow the same process with row after row until the apple is thickly covered. You can see both star-shapped headless cloves and full, knobby one. After the apple is studded with cloves, let it drain on paper for a couple of hours. It's then ready to go to work. Just hang it in the clothes closet, or tuck it away among the household cottons or linens. Incidentally--you can keep this spice ball right on the job for years.

Or perhaps you would prefer a clove orange. You make a clove orange with a small thin-skinned orange. You'll also need whole cloves and two teaspoons each of powdered orris root and powdered cinnamon. Carefully cover the orange with whole cloves. When you've done that, rub the powdered orris and cinnamon generously over the fruit. Then wrap the clove-studded orange in tissue paper and keep it wrapped for a week. When you take it out of the tissue, gently brush off the excess powder The finished product is then ready for use. By the way - if you prefer to give Christmas gifts with a personal touch, you can't go wrong on one of these spice balls.

But - getting back to clothes problem - there's another question that keeps bobbing up. It usually reads like this: "I'm rearranging my clothes closet, but can't find a clothes rod. What can I use instead?" Well, the extension specialist suggest a well-seasoned broom or rake handle, will make a durable clothes rod. And in answer to the usual question about installing clothes rods, here are the directions: Place clothes rods high enough to allow 6 inches between hanging garments and the floor. The 6-inch space makes it easier to clean the floor of the

closet--of course. Another important consideration is the space above the clothes rod. If you place a shelf above the rod, leave at least 2½ inches of space between the bottom of the shelf and the rod. Without at least this much space, you'll have trouble removing or placing clothes hangers.

And now--for one last suggestion on winter clothing worries. Do your suits or dresses or coats get wrinkled hanging in the clothes closet? If so, you probably need to install another clothes rod. Each garment just may not have enough room. One way to find out "for sure" is to measure the rod. Then allow 1½ to 6 inches space for each garment--depending on the type of garment. Shirts and dresses take an inch and a half. Skirts, suits and evening dresses need 2 inches of space. And you need to allow 3 inches for jackets and trousers. More space is needed for coat of course. Overcoats need a 4 inch space on the clothes rod, and coats with fur collars--from 3 to 6 inches.

So - if your clothes demand too much pressing--try a little measuring. Another clothes rod will probably solve your problem.

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